

THE FLAT HAT
College of William and Mary
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FBI Has 1,650 Page W&M File

by John Bloom

Flat Hat Editor-in-Chief

The FBI revealed this month that it has about 1,650 pages of information on William and Mary in its files. The Flat Hat has formally asked for the file under the Freedom of Information Act, and may begin receiving unclassified portions of the file in November, according to Marvin Lewis, an agent in the Freedom of Information and Privacy Act branch of the FBI.

Lewis, who has not seen the William and Mary file, speculated that "the bulk of it"

may be reports and investigations of campus unrest in the late 1960s and early 1970s. He said it was a common practice for the FBI to maintain informants on college campuses during that time, and that the FBI investigated bomb threats, protest rallies, sit-ins and other forms of dissent on campus. "Leftist" student leaders were also carefully watched, he said.

Lewis said the file also might contain correspondence with the College's placement and career planning offices.

Lewis said The Flat Hat's request (no. 98,909) has probably been assigned to an "analyst" by now. The analyst will locate the file and determine which portions must go through a "classification review" process before being released. Material which must be reviewed will probably not be available until early 1981, but the rest of the file may be sent piecemeal beginning in November.

The Flat Hat requested the FBI file after successfully obtaining a 40-page file from the CIA last spring. That file focused on 'radical' student behavior in the early 1970s, while students were protesting the College's 'in loco parentis' social regulations and the Vietnam War. Included were periodic reports from an on-campus informant believed to be a former member of the College administration.

The informant's reports were part of the now defunct 'Project Resistance,' a nationwide effort by the CIA to monitor leftist students.

According to Jay Peterzell, a spokesperson for the ACLU's Center for National Security Studies, William and Mary is "one of only four or five schools" where the CIA used an informant in conjunction with Project Resistance. He said that in the Rockefeller and Church committee inquiries into CIA activities, CIA officials stated that informants were never part of Project Resistance.

A rewritten version of The Flat Hat's CIA story appeared on the front page of The Richmond Times Dispatch in April. The story then spread to the Associated Press and to newspapers across the state. The reporter who wrote the original story, Jennifer McBride, won first place in a statewide collegiate newswriting contest for her work.

Compared to the CIA file, Lewis said the FBI file would be much more "dry and detailed." "I don't think you will get the editorializing that you got from the CIA," he said.

The CIA reports included the analysis and opinions of the informant. One report concluded with the warning that "the College of William and Mary will undergo severe ferment and disorder in the coming year, regardless of the national scene, because the radical elements control most student functions." Specifically, the informant asserted that a small group of "radical" students has gained control of The Flat Hat and the Student Association, and that the radicals were supported by "three or four weirdo professors."

On the advice of the Center for National Security Studies, The Flat Hat has appealed the CIA's decision to withhold pages and paragraphs from its file (see accompanying illustration). This appeal is still being processed.

Because the FBI decided that releasing its file would not benefit the general public, it denied the newspaper's request for a waiver of fees. The FBI warned that the cost of photostating the file may run as high as \$165. The CIA copied its William and Mary file for free.

This report, submitted in accordance with the requirements of Project RESISTANCE, concerns primarily [redacted] at the College of William and Mary and a summary of recent dissident activities at that institution.

GENERAL

At Williamsburg, Virginia

Shown above is the beginning of dozens of deletions in the CIA file. The entire general summary (more than four pages) was censored. The Flat Hat has appealed to have the deleted material released. The CIA claims 'national security' or 'protection of CIA sources and methods' for all the deletions.

Below is an excerpt from the CIA's summary of the informant's report dated about the time of the Kent State shootings.

The Informant reported that the college newspaper and radical students devoted their energies toward gaining offices in the Student Government Association until the events of 6 May 1970 gained their attention. The Informant said that in spite of efforts of conservative elements the radicals succeeded in gaining the presidency of the Student Government Association and continued control of the college newspaper. The Informant summarized the following events on campus from 6 May 1970 to